

Message Text

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42

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 RSR-01 SS-15 NSC-10 L-03 H-02

PA-03 PRS-01 USIA-12 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 /089 W
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R 271315 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4408

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

INFO AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 982

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRN, BC, SF, WZ

SUBJ: AIA INTEREST IN ESTABLISHING DOMESTIC AIRLINE

HAVE TALKED TO FRED BRAUCH, ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT ALASKA INTERNATIONAL AIR, CONCERNING STATUS AIA INTEREST AND ACTIVITY IN PURSUING ESTABLISHMENT DOMESTIC AIRLINE. OUR TALK REVEALED FOLLOWING:

1. AIA HAS STRONG INTEREST IN PARTICIPATION IN DOMESTIC AIRLINE AND FROM TALKS WITH PHIL STEENKAMP, ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY OFFICE PRESIDENT, BELIEVE GOB ALSO HAS CONSIDERABLE ENTHUSIASM FOR THIS PROSPECT. ONLY NEGATIVE REACTION OBTAINED TO DATE HAS BEEN FROM RALPH STEVENS, BOTSWANA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION MANAGER. STEVENS COOLNESS IS HOWEVER IMMATERIAL.

2. AIA, IN PURSUING THIS VENTURE, HAS JOINED FORCES WITH FREIGHT SERVICES LIMITED A SOUTH AFRICAN FREIGHT CARRIER WHICH IS 53 PERCENT OWNED BY ANGLO- AMERICAN. CONCENTRATION IS ON ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AIRLINE SERVICE WITH INITIALLY THE PARTICIPATION OF ONLY SWAZILAND AND BOTSWANA. LITTLE INTEREST IN LESOTHO AT THIS TIME SINCE IT DOES NOT PRESENT SUFFICIENT CURRENT BUSINESS OR HAVE THE POTENTIAL OF SWAZILAND AND

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BOTSWANA.

3. AIRLINE WOULD BE BASED IN JOHANNESBURG WHERE SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE. CONSIDERATION BEING GIVEN TO STARTING OUT WITH ONE BOEING 737 CONFIGURED FOR BOTH PASSENGER AND FREIGHT TRAFFIC. UTILIZATION OF A 737 WOULD REQUIRE NEW AND RELOCATED RUNWAYS IN BOTH SWAZILAND AND BOTSWANA.

4. BRAUCH TOGETHER WITH TWO DIRECTORS OF FREIGHT SERVICES AND AN UNNAMED SOUTH AFRICAN SENATOR WILL TRAVEL TO SWAZILAND WEEK JULY SECOND FOR TALKS WITH SWAZI OFFICIALS. HAVE REQUESTED THAT BRAUCH CALL AT EMBASSY TO REPORT ON PROGRESS.

5. TIMETABLE DEVELOPED BY BRAUCH CALLS FOR DEFINITIVE DECISION BY END THIS CALENDAR YEAR. ALSO INDICATED THAT AIA PARTICIPATION WOULD BE MINIMUM 25 PERCENT TOTAL CAPITALIZATION. NELSON

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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